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GardenNOTES



NORTHWEST HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

WINTER 2011

~ 2011 SPRING GARDENING SYMPOSIUM ~

Inspiration and Beauty in the Environmentally Responsible Garden

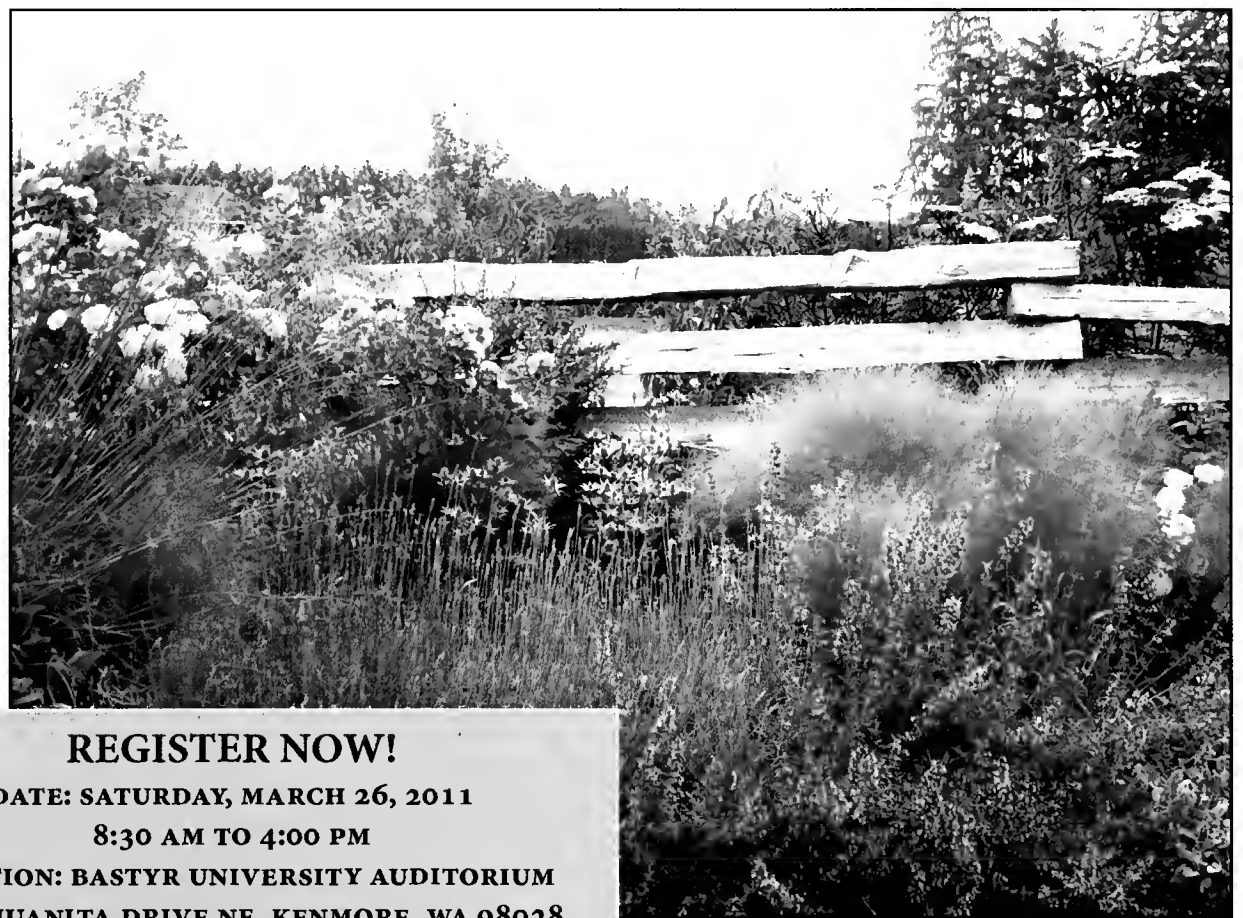
HANS MANDT

OVER THE PAST SEVERAL YEARS we've all become more serious about gardening in an environmentally friendly manner, whether it's out of frustration with our water bill in the summer months or the amount of work and money it takes to attempt to grow plants that are clearly inappropriate for the environment that actually exists in our gardens. The good news is that there are a number of resources available to help us create gardens that are inspirational, beautiful, and ecologically sound. These gardens will ultimately require much less input, grow more abundantly, and give the environment a boost in the process.

At our Spring Gardening Symposium we will learn from **Paul Bonine** how to enhance our plant palette to take advantage of plants that will thrive in our Northwest summers with minimal or no additional water.

Kate Frey will inform us how to add plants to our gardens that will provide essential habitat for pollinators. As more of us are adding edible vegetables and fruits in our garden landscapes, pollination will be essential to successful harvests.

We are fortunate to have one of the nation's leading proponents of sustainable horticulture. **Eric "T" Fleisher** will



REGISTER NOW!

DATE: SATURDAY, MARCH 26, 2011

8:30 AM TO 4:00 PM

LOCATION: BASTYR UNIVERSITY AUDITORIUM
14500 JUANITA DRIVE NE, KENMORE, WA 98028

FEE: MEMBERS \$60.00, NON-MEMBERS \$80.00
(fee includes lunch)

REGISTRATION:

E-MAIL NWHORT@AOL.COM OR PHONE 206-780-8172

outline the most important components to implement an ecologically based landscape management program. His work at Battery Park in New York has brought in Piet Oudolf who has been working on the design and planting of the gardens at Battery Park since 2003.

Finally, **Thomas Hobbs** will be joining

A border at Thomas Hobbs's new garden (Thomas Hobbs)

us to describe how he left his "Shockingly Beautiful" home and garden in Vancouver, B.C. and moved to twenty acres just north of the U.S. border, where he began all over again and made a beautiful new garden.

To enhance your ability to create a more environmentally sensitive garden which will give you inspiration, the Northwest Horticultural Society, with ▶

2011 Spring Gardening Symposium . . . CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

support from the Pendleton and Elisabeth Carey Miller Charitable Foundation and the Elisabeth Carey Miller Botanical Garden, is pleased to present our **2011 Spring Gardening Symposium, Inspiration and Beauty in the Environmentally Responsible Garden.**

~ SPEAKERS ~

PAUL BONINE GROWING DRY IN THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST



Paul Bonine is co-owner and founder of Xera Plants, Inc. a wholesale nursery dedicated to bringing unusual plants and plants that are adapted to low water use to the Pacific Northwest.

In 2009, he published the book *Black Plants: 75 Striking Choices for the Garden.*

The Pacific Northwest experiences dry summers, and we should take advantage of this to enhance our plant palette. Many plants from perennials to shrubs, vines, and trees are very well-adapted to these conditions. Low water gardens are cheaper and easier to maintain and will become more common in the future. But, it doesn't mean that we have to sacrifice diversity and aesthetics.

KATE FREY INSPIRATIONAL PLANTINGS FOR POLLINATORS



Kate Frey was the managing horticulturist and designer of the organic gardens at Fetzer Vineyards for 18 years. She has twice won gold medals at the

Chelsea Flower Show in London. She currently works as a consultant and designer of sustainable gardens that encourage biodiversity. In July 2009, Kate became the director of the Sonoma State University Sustainable Landscape Program.

Accommodating pollinators in our gardens helps perpetuate species whose habitats have been severely impacted by agricultural and urban development. There are 4,000 species of native bees in North America. Many native bees will thrive in urban and suburban settings if there are enough floral resources to sustain them. Plants that offer appropriate pollen and nectar resources to pollinating insects can be used in inspirational ways in garden settings. Kate will offer an overview of the common groups of pollinators, the plants they prefer, and show examples of beautiful gardens that foster them.

ERIC T. FLEISHER MANAGING THE ENVIRONMENT: AN ADAPTIVE CHALLENGE

Eric "T" Fleisher is the director of horticulture at Battery Park City Parks Conservancy (BPCPC) in lower Manhattan. A national leader in the field of sustainable horticulture, Fleisher has brought this 37-acre oasis of parkland on the Hudson River to the forefront as the only public garden space in New York City to be maintained completely organically. His methods are based on the development of balanced soil ecology, with an emphasis on composting, water conservation, and the use of nontoxic means of pest and disease control. T. Fleisher also serves as a consultant at Harvard University.



Managing our environment responsibly is a challenge that requires us to make philosophical and behavioral changes. In his work over the past 25 years T. Fleisher has been developing protocols that will help our landscape recover from the 20th century's industrial interventions.

Mr. Fleisher will be describing the design and implementation of a sustainable landscape management program utilizing the public parks at Battery Park City and the

campus at Harvard University as models. He will describe the most important components required to successfully implement a sustainable landscape management program. These programs avoid the use of chemicals, and significantly reduce the use of nitrogen. His techniques focus on encouraging natural nutrient cycling systems through proper soil management and plant care.

THOMAS HOBBS DREAMS + DESIRE = DESTINY OR DISASTER?

After high school, Tom Hobbs opened his first shop selling only houseplants. He decided to become a florist and business grew. *Thomas Hobbs Florist* became a household name in Vancouver, B.C. and elsewhere. His plans for going to the university evaporated.



His garden in Vancouver became well-known for its "Zonal Denial" Hollywood North theme. This was his laboratory for playing with color and pioneering the succulent craze. In 1991, with his partner Brent Beattie, he acquired the long-established but nearly bankrupt Southlands Nursery in an upscale neighborhood, and has had fun making it beautiful. He wrote *Shocking Beauty*, followed by *The Jewel Box Garden*. Tom and Brent sold their much-loved Spanish style house in Vancouver in 2007. They are now farmers, having purchased 20 stunning, rolling acres in Langley, B.C.

Tom has a knack for taking action and making dreams come true. Risk is Tom's drug of choice. But, this time the action was major: selling their lovely home and buying 20 acres with two growing operations, two hideous houses, crack addicts, abandoned llamas, but phenomenal potential. It was not easy, but Tom will share the amazing results with us. 🌱

Hans Mandt is the past president of NHS.

NORTHWEST FLOWER & GARDEN SHOW FREE FLOWER SHOW TICKET!

NITA-JO ROUNTREE

VOLUNTEER AT THE NHS BOOTH for a three hour shift February 23-27 at the Northwest Flower & Garden Show and get free admission to the show. See 25 lavishly landscaped gardens, the container show, and floral displays. There will also be over 250 exhibitors and 75 nurseries selling garden tools and paraphernalia, bulbs, and mouth-watering plants. The show is a feast for the eyes and the senses. Additionally, there are sensational seminars and demonstrations everyday.

Listed below are NHS members who will be speaking at the show. We



NHS booth at the Northwest Flower & Garden Show (Nita-Jo Rountree)

hope you will support them by attending their captivating lectures.

The purpose of the NHS booth is to solicit new members and to greet current ones. It's a fun way to get to know fellow gardening enthusiasts. Best of all, no experience is necessary! And, the volunteer who sells the most new memberships will be awarded a free one year membership to NHS! Our booth number is 2414. Volunteer early to secure your first choice of shifts. Contact Karin Kravitz at nwhort@aol.com or 206-780-8172. 🌱

NHS MEMBERS TO SPEAK AT GARDEN SHOW

JANET ENDSLEY

"ONCE UPON A TIME...SPECTACULAR GARDENS WITH STORIES to Tell" is the theme at the 23rd annual Northwest Flower & Garden Show, February 23-27 at the Washington State Convention Center. Once again, NHS luminaries will be speaking. Now you can access the show with The Garden Show Blog featuring show speakers, garden creators, and exhibitors. "Like" the show's Facebook page and follow us on Twitter for a chance to win free tickets and a Fairy Tale Prize. For the complete seminar schedule and speaker bios go to www.gardenshow.com. 🌱

~ Wednesday, February 23 ~

| | |
|------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Lorene Edwards Forkner | "The Herbal Kitchen" |
| Karen Chapman | "Pizzazz in a Pot" |
| Marty Wingate | "Garden Travel Your Way" |
| Lucy Hardiman, Host | "The Future of Gardening" |
| Val Easton | "The Future of Gardening" |
| Mary Robson | "Digging into Books" |
| Rizaniño "Riz" Reyes | "The Year-Round Container Gardener" |

~ Thursday, February 24 ~

| | |
|------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Cass Turnbull | "Devine Vines" |
| Ciscoe Morris, Host | "Unforgettable Characters" |
| Marianne Binetti | "Unforgettable Characters" |
| Cass Turnbull | "Unforgettable Characters" |
| Shirley Pinchev Sidell | "Plants of the Bible" |
| Debra Prinzing | "Floral Design with Spring Bulbs" |

~ Friday, February 25 ~

| | |
|----------------------|--------------------------------|
| Lucy Hardiman | "Inside the Designer's Studio" |
| Richie Steffen, Host | "Plant Explorer Chronicles" |
| Debra Prinzing | "The Winter Bouquet" |

~ Saturday, February 26 ~

| | |
|------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Ciscoe Morris | "They Will Not be Stumped!" |
| Judith Jones | "The Riverbank Adventure" |
| Lorene Edwards Forkner | "Incredible Edibles" |
| Nita-Jo Rountree | "Hydrangeas: What, How, WOW!" |
| Wendy Welch | "Container Culture: Truth vs. Myth" |
| Richie Steffen | "Fun in the Sun" |

~ Sunday, February 27 ~

| | |
|------------------|------------------------------|
| Marianne Binetti | "A Tale of Two Gardens" |
| Phil Wood | "Moving Through Your Garden" |
| Sarah Reichard | "Plant This Instead!" |
| Judith Jones | "The Riverbank Adventure" |

Janet Endsley is the Seminar & Social Media Manager for the Northwest Flower & Garden Show.

ENGLAND GARDEN TOUR

JUDY REDMOND

I AM A MEMBER OF THE GARDEN WRITERS ASSOCIATION and was fortunate to go on a tour of English gardens this year from July 3–11. We visited ten gardens including Abbey Gardens, Beth Chatto's gardens, Blooms of Bressingham, and the Royal Horticultural Society's (RHS) Wisley gardens. This article touches on some of the highlights of this trip.

Abbey Gardens, Bury St. Edmunds, Suffolk

This medieval market town includes Abbey Gardens and the 1,000 year old St. Edmundsbury Cathedral. Abbey Gardens is built on the site of a Benedictine abbey erected in 1020 to house the tomb of King Edmund who refused to renounce his Christian faith and was thus beheaded in 869 AD. The gardens are well-known for their stunning floral displays and smaller gardens including the Water Garden, the Herb Garden, and the Sensory Garden. Since I'm a "rose fanatic," I especially enjoyed the beautiful rose garden, which includes sixteen rose beds and 400 rose bushes surrounded by fragrant lavender. www.stedmundsbury.gov.uk/sebc/play/abbeygardens.cfm#rosegarden

Beth Chatto's Gardens, Essex



Garden designer Beth Chatto in the Gravel Garden

Garden writer/designer Beth Chatto is one of the most influential living gardeners in Britain best known for her pioneering, ecological approach to gardening. The gardens grew out of a patch of wasteland at the back of her fruit farm. She began the garden in 1960, and set about finding plants to suit the difficult growing conditions. The large Gravel Garden has been filled with drought-loving plants

with alliums providing jewel-rich colors, while kniphofias and verbascums add strong vertical interest among the bold groupings of ballota, lavandula, and santolina. In autumn, tall grasses shimmer, punctuating the landscape. A soggy hollow has been transformed into a dramatic water garden. Chatto, now 87 years old, was gracious enough to talk to our group about the Gravel Garden. She's also a testament to the benefits of gardening as a form of exercise. www.bethchatto.co.uk/

Blooms of Bressingham, Gloucestershire

At Blooms of Bressingham we attended a press event with garden writers from the UK, Europe, the U.S., and Canada. I had previ-

ously attended a seminar on June 22 at Molbak's presented by Adrian Bloom so I was already somewhat familiar with this garden. Alan Bloom, founder of the Bloom's nursery business, created the Dell Garden and its famous island beds from 1955-1962. Equally famous, yet totally different from this garden, son Adrian has created a garden for all seasons at "Foggy Bottom." Planting for this garden began in 1966 and today trees, conifers, and shrubs provide a continuous backdrop of shape and seasonal foliage, enhanced by plantings of perennials and ornamental grasses. Adrian Bloom gave us a personal tour of the 17 densely planted acres with over 8,000 varieties of plants. I really love ornamental grasses so I was naturally drawn to the Japanese forest grass and black mondo grass border pictured above. www.bloomsofbressinghamplants.com/



Hakonechloa and Ophiopogon planiscapus 'Nigrescens'

RHS Wisley Gardens, Surrey

RHS Wisley is a beautiful garden with romantic half-timbered Tudor-style buildings. There are many smaller gardens including a rock garden, formal and walled gardens, a rose garden, a mixed border garden, glasshouses, a fruit field, and an arboretum. The flagship garden of the RHS, Wisley was gifted to the Society in 1903. In the trial fields, the finest flowers and vegetables are identified from the many new introductions.

Elsewhere, cultivation techniques such as composting or pleaching are tried and tested, and a series of model gardens

deal with a variety of growing conditions. I particularly enjoyed the glasshouse with many exotic plants. www.rhs.org.uk/Home

All in all, it was an exciting, fun, and interesting trip. I look forward to touring more European gardens in the future. 🌿



Eryngium with honeybees
(All photos courtesy of Judy Redmond)

Judy Redmond is the editor of Garden Notes.

A GARDEN OF FAUX PAS

SUE GOETZ

THE WORDS *BLUNDER*, *MISTAKE*, or as Webster's defines it, *indiscretion* sound less demeaning when called a *faux pas*. In a garden, blunders tend to show off for all to see or create back-breaking work to correct them. There are moments where garden sensibilities go astray.

Green meatballs



Drive down any city street and observe the landscaping—there is a phenomenon taking place. Shrubs become perfectly shaped orbs resembling large green meatballs. These are not topiaries; they are exasperating blunders of unskilled people wielding trimmers. The shrubs fight their way to normalcy every season only to be mercilessly lopped away again. Please pass on the meatballs and allow shrubs to grow to their natural beauty. If pruning needs to happen, arm yourself with good tools, proper techniques, and figure out why in the heck you are pruning the plant in the first place.

Random acts of landscaping

Consider renegade laurel, indiscriminate bamboo, and plummy pampas. Did you really think the English laurel could be kept trimmed to that perfect height for your needs? Forego a season of trim-

ming, and you may need professional help (for you and the plant). Bamboo, that breezy barrier between neighbors, was a good idea until it had to be hacked out of the grass with a pickaxe.

We love our ornamental grasses but one variety struggles with identity crisis. Pampas grass: ornamental grass or ghastly creature? Author Beverley Nichols notes in his book *Garden Open Today* "...A well-grown pampas grass sited in the middle of a suburban lawn, with all those ghastly feather dusters sticking out of it, can be as embarrassing as a middle-aged lady standing on the steps of a provincial town hall, disguised as Cleopatra after the annual fancy dress ball at the Rotary Club." Remember the old adage "right plant, right place?" Expand that notion to "right plant, right place, right garden, right gardener!"

Don't be so nice!

Are you the ever-optimistic nurturer of ugly plants? Consider the nasty over-aged blue fescue, the sluggy hostas, and that half-alive heather. You nurture and tell yourself it will get better next season if you give it good compost or magic worm tea. How long does it have to be ugly before you are tired of it? Don't hesitate to rip something out that is beyond its prime. Take into account the value of replacement; is it really worth trying to get a plant back into shape? Plant removal can be hard, but tell yourself you are doing the right thing. Be a bit ruthless.

The impatient gardener

Don't be fooled by the gorgeous magazine gardens. Many took

years to get to that photogenic point. An exhausting mistake in a new landscape is cramming in plants for instant gratification. The outcome is the need to edit out plants that have collided with each other. Keep the plant's mature size and speed of growth in mind when planning where it goes. Place rapid-growing plants near slow-growing ones. Space trees and shrubs properly by their growing habits and fill in the blanks with faster-growing herbaceous perennials that need division within a few years anyway. There are no set rules; besides, plant tags and references can be ambiguous. Use simple logic to place plants based on maturity and speed of growth. Be patient and enjoy your newly planted space.

No one is immune from a garden of *faux pas*. Ask a beginner or a professional; we've all been there. The good news is that gardens are a process, never final. We learn from our mistakes and create better versions of our gardens and ourselves as we continue to obsess and dig in. 🌱

Sue Goetz is an NHS board member and garden designer who owns Creative Gardener, www.thecreativegardener.com.



VOLUNTEER PROFILE: SUE GROSZ

LOIS WILLMAN

I HAVE NEVER MET A “COUCH POTATO” gardener. One might think that the term “multi-tasker” originated when someone observed the daily life of a gardener. This sentiment is certainly exemplified in the broad spectrum of interests and activities of Sue Grosz.

Sue became actively involved in gardening just a few years ago and was eager to learn more. She started going to various plant sales and garden tours; that’s how she learned about NHS. She joined immediately and wanted to contribute to the organization, as well as learn, so she volunteered to help with the Fall Plant Sale. Her enthusiasm and work ethic caught the eye of the Plant Sale Committee. For the last two years she has served as Vendor Coordinator for the Fall Plant Sale and also assists with the spring sale.

In addition to Sue’s non-stop energy, an important asset is her background as a buyer and display designer in retail. Beyond serving as liaison with the plant sale vendors she said, “I make a special effort to assist them in ways that will make them more successful. I want to



Sue Grosz with her 2-year-old female Welsh terrier dog, Ziva (Woodbury)

give each vendor special attention with their display area and facilitate any special needs they may have.”

When asked how she first got into gardening, she immediately replied, “self preservation.” When she and her husband moved onto their Kenmore property several years ago, it was just

a blank slate landscape-wise. “It was one-third acre of big firs, old rhodies, and dying hebes.” Since her husband had always been a gardener and she wasn’t “All he would let me do for the first few years was pull weeds! I finally got to the point where I wanted to have a say in the process so I knew I had to get smarter. NHS has helped me do that.”

Sue enjoys being a “handywoman.” “I love painting and doing various handiworks that many people can’t do for themselves.” When customers find she is as talented in assisting them with their gardening issues as she is installing a bookcase, they are quick to ask for her help. She now assists people with plant selections, installations, and maintenance.

So when you venture out to an upcoming NHS plant sale, be sure and look for Sue. She will be the tall, slender, redhead bustling through the vendor tables wondering where she can be of help next! 🍁

Lois Willman is a board member and co-chairs the fall and spring plant sales.

~ WELCOME NEW MEMBERS ~

Louise Abbott
Marie Adlhoch
Kathleen Archer
Kathleen Bander
W. A. Banks
Kim Bateman
Darcey Blinn
Corinne & David Brown
Nancy Buckner
Cindy Burgess
Rodger Burnett
Lisa Caylor

Karen Chapman
Patti Denman
Ruth Dumpit
Deanna Fraker
Daniel Gregory
Heidi Hower
Virginia Jenkins
Adrienne Karpov
Philomena Kedziorski
June Kerseg-Hinson
Laura Kleppe
Debra Lacy

Laura Lampe
Corinne Leonard
Ruth Lipscomb
Penelope Locke
Barbara Lyle
Diane McDonald
Patricia A. McGuinness
Sally Murdoch
Pat Murphy
Rebecca Murphy
Courtney Olander
Constance Purchase

Olive Rieflin
Stephanie Rodden
Nancy K. Salovich
J. Peter Shapiro
Margaret Flowers Sobel
Laurel-Lynn Swol
Quill Teal-Sullivan
Thomas Tokarz
Robin Updike
Marian Weldin
Marianne Willumsen
Kathy Wisbeck

MILLER LIBRARY NEWS

BRIAN THOMPSON

WINTER GRAY GETTING THE BEST of you? Escape to the Miller Library for some color! Over 30 innovative quilts—yes, quilts!—make up the exhibit *From the Ground Up* that will be on display through Saturday, January 29, 2011.

These are not your grandma's quilts. The artists are all members of the Contemporary QuiltArt Association and, "...view quilts as an exciting, emerging medium of expression and a viable contemporary art form."

www.contemporaryquiltart.com

The subjects range from *Clematis montana* to skunk cabbage, and from leaf skeletons to a study of Lake Cushman through the changing seasons. One mixed media piece uses coffee stirrers to highlight the life cycle of a plant.

A perfect time to visit is Wednesday evening, January 12, 2011, before the

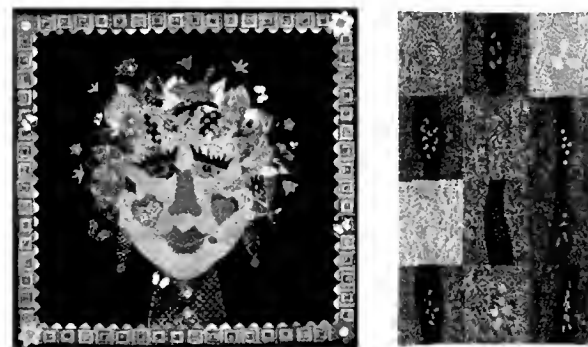
NHS lecture when the library stays open until 7:00 pm. Come see the art, check out a few books, and see the latest issues of your favorite gardening magazines.

Speaking of books, did you know you can receive a monthly listing by e-mail of the new books at the Miller Library? Recent titles cover everything from the history of landscape design to a guide to poisonous plants for parents and child-care providers. In the Children's Collection, new publications from *Kids Can Press* encourage and guide children and their families to grow their own food. To sign up for the monthly list, go to the library's website at www.millerlibrary.org.

The library staff is looking forward to the *Ephemerals... and More!* plant sale in March. Many thanks to NHS for this fundraising effort on our behalf, and for helping make our 25th anniversary cel-

ebration in early November such a huge success. An evening gala and a Saturday open house combined to thank our many donors and volunteers from over the years, and to welcome new visitors and neighbors. 🌱

Brian Thompson is the manager and curator of horticultural literature for the Elisabeth C. Miller Library.



UPPER LEFT: "Garden Gal...Digs It... In Spades" (Sonia Grasvik)

UPPER RIGHT: "Seeds of Change" (Barbara Nepom)

SPRING PLANT SALE TO BENEFIT MILLER LIBRARY

DEBORAH HEG

WHEN THE FOURTH ANNUAL Spring Plant Sale comes to CUH on **Saturday, March 12**, there will be exciting changes. An expanded name: *Ephemerals... and More!* will reflect a larger and wider-ranging event. There will be many new features and a new recipient for the funds. Just around the time that our blood starts to thin and the blooms of late winter renew our interest in all things horticultural, this sale offers much to see, learn, and buy!

Support of the Miller Library is an important part of our work at NHS. Now we are permanently dedicating an annual event—this plant sale—as a fundraiser for the library. We look forward to the growth and fun-for-all of this fundraiser.

The sale offers an opportunity to explore and celebrate the plant groups that bring excitement to our late winter/early spring gardens. This year the spotlight will be on hellebores, a tough and easy-care genus that continues expanding its range of stunning flowers and elegant foliage.

We are excited that world-renowned horticulturist Dan Hinkley will be speaking at the sale. Dan has been a dedicated supporter of the Miller Library, harkening back to the fondly remembered Hellebore Opens at Heronswood Nursery each year. He has been a moving force in building this enlarged event for the library's sake.

A larger venue will allow us to increase the number of excellent vendors and

widen the range of plants available. In addition, there will be horticultural displays featuring many great plants that shine in late winter/early spring, with an emphasis on hellebores. And there will be a drawing for some very special plants!

The Miller Library will be open featuring books related to the season and to answer any gardening questions you can pose.

So join us on **Saturday, March 12 from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm** at the Center for Urban Horticulture. We look forward to a fun and rewarding day. 🌱

Deborah Heg is an NHS board member and chairs the Miller Library Committee.

The Story of Plants: BAY LAUREL

DANIEL MOUNT

ILLUSTRATION BY SYLVIA PORTILLO

CULTIVATING FRIENDSHIP WAS Epicurus's primary mode of teaching. He called his philosophy school in ancient Greece "The Garden." He taught that all you needed to know about life can be learned from gardening, cooking, and sharing meals with friends. His brave beliefs were frowned upon by the high-minded Greeks. Yet he had a large following and was, no doubt, crowned with laurels, the ancient Greek way to honor poets, athletes, and rulers.

I am not speaking of cherry laurel (*Prunus laurocerasus*), common here, but bay laurel, or bay (*Laurus nobilis*). This aromatic tree, which can reach 35 feet, is not native to Greece. It is an archaeophyte, a plant introduced in ancient times which has naturalized into a region. It is probably native to Asia Minor. Long before Epicurus began his garden school, laurel was being used in cooking, medicine, and for starting fires. Sacred to the sun god Apollo and the fire sign Leo, it has long been attributed with bringing light. At Delphi, priestesses were inhaling the smoke of burning bay wood to inspire their divinations. Strangely, centuries later a tea of bay leaves was prescribed to calm hysterics and branches were hung to repel witches.

To most of us bay, suitable for topiary and hedges, is a kitchen herb; it has lost any magical qualities. Yet, I still maintain my family's belief that he who gets the bay leaf in his soup bowl will have good luck. Maybe good health, too. That this integral component in *bouquet garni* aids in digestion is probably why it ended up in so many pots. I love the deliciously camphorous flavor it imparts. The other species in genus Azores bay (*L. azorica*)—possibly two species—comes from the warm islands of the eastern Atlantic. Grown throughout the tropical world, it is used extensively in cooking and medicine too.

The bays share their aromatic trait with many members of the laurel family, Lauraceae. This family of primarily evergreen trees and shrubs from the tropics and sub-tropics worldwide has 57 genera and close to 2,500 species according to the USDA. Much research is being performed on the useful oils of many members of the laurel family. Cinnamon (*Cinnamomum verum*)



which flavors everything from curries to cookies is said to be loaded with health benefits. So is the delectable avocado (*Persea americana*) touted as the world's healthiest fruit.

Even Japanese spicebush (*Lindera obtusiloba*) and sassafras (*Sassafras albidum*), both temperate garden favorites,

are rich in fragrant healing oils long in

use. So is the only member of

the laurel family native to the

West Coast, the monotypic California bay (*Umbellularia californica*).

I grow a California bay in a pot. I left it

and my true bay out during the cold

snap of 2009. The California bay

didn't drop a leaf while my true

bay died. But I find California

bay (one of its common

names is headache tree) a little

too aromatic for cooking. So I am

trying a hardier narrow leafed form

of true bay (*L. nobilis* f. *angustifolia*) this

winter.

Though the bay has naturalized in river valleys of the Mediterranean I planted my new bay in a russet pot the color of Grecian

soil to ensure good drainage. My dear friend, the brave gardener Jon Dove, planted a laurel hedge in the Duwamish Valley 15 years ago. It has proven to be a tough, solid hedge in his deep alluvial soil, withstanding the reflected heat of his black-topped alley, as well as many harsh winters.

As the year winds down, I find myself gardening less and making more soups and fires for friends who bring light to this dark time.

As Epicurus said, "Of all the things which wisdom acquires to produce the blessedness of the complete life, for the greatest is the possession of friendship."

And I might add the wisdom to bring the bay laurel in from the cold. 🌿

Read more of Daniel's thoughts on plants and gardening on his blog www.danielmountgardens.blogspot.com.

Sylvia Portillo is a botanical illustrator and student at South Seattle Community College. She can be reached at sportil@comcast.net.

2011 NHS TOURS

GILLIAN MATHEWS

2010 WAS AGAIN A BUSY YEAR for the NHS Tour Committee. The year kicked off with Debra Prinzing's amazing Los Angeles tour, followed by tours of Vashon Island, Gig Harbor, Whidbey Island, and the Kitsap Peninsula. More than 130 members enjoyed an NHS tour in 2010, discovering vegetable and designer gardens, a stump-py, and drought-tolerant gardens.


Looking forward to 2011, we have a number of exciting tours in the planning stages, including a tour of Germany and Holland which Hans Mandt has planned.

2011 TOUR OF GERMAN GARDENS WITH ROBERT HERMAN JUNE 15-30, 2011

Robert Herman, a past symposium speaker, is very knowledgeable about contemporary German gardens and designers and the new perennial gardening movement. Starting in Munich (four nights),

the tour will visit Stuttgart and Heidelberg (two nights). While in Heidelberg you'll travel to Weinheim and Hermanshof, the renowned North American prairie garden, a mecca for designers of the new perennial movement. Next, we go to Rudesheim (two nights) where wineries abound, spending one day cruising down the Rhine to Koblenz and the German National Garden Show. Then it's off to Frankfurt and Berlin (three nights) where we'll visit Potsdam and the Sans Souci Palace and the restored gardens of Karl Foerster. From Berlin we travel to Hanover (one night) and the gardens at Herrenhausen. The tour will end in the Netherlands with a visit to the personal garden of Piet Oudolf and a final night in Amsterdam. For more details and to download a complete itinerary go to www.northwesthort.org/tours.

Closer to home, we are planning a day trip in early spring to Pt. Townsend including Far Reaches Nursery, a July day hike

with Daniel Mount to Tucquala Meadows in the North Cascades, a series of "Meet the Designer" day tours, and a weekend trip to Vancouver, B.C. and Bellingham. Please e-mail any tour suggestions or comments to nwhort@aol.com. 

Gillian Mathews, Renee Montgelas, and Mary Palmer serve on the NHS Tour Committee.



Staghorn ferns from the May 2010 Los Angeles tour (Gillian Mathews)

CHILDREN'S PLAYGARDEN HONORS NHS

WENDY WELCH

"I LOVE SWISS CHARD, and it loves me!" shouts Jaideep, age six, as he dances about at the Seattle Children's PlayGarden with fistfuls of the stuff he's harvested himself. This is just one of the many joyful and inspiring moments you'll see at the PlayGarden. Located in Colman Park, the entire facility and all of its programs are designed to integrate children with and without disabilities, providing experiences to inspire lifelong environmental stewardship and nurturing the next generation of gardeners.

NHS awarded two grants of \$2,500 in 2007 and 2008 to the PlayGarden which paid for the *John and Lee Neff Potager*. Kids can harvest edibles through the large sliding garage door windows and use them straight away in the preparation of




From the PlayGarden (Kathy Sitchin)

fresh meals—truly garden to table!

Last May, NHS sponsored the very successful PlayGarden auction held at CUH where \$30,000 was raised. That money was put to quick use with the installation of a butterfly border, six large

shade trees, a living fence, foundation plantings, a new lawn in the Play Plaza, irrigation, and six large topiary animals.

In appreciation, the PlayGarden honored NHS at their annual Give and Grow Luncheon in September. PlayGarden executive director Liz Bullard presented departing NHS president Hans Mandt with an annual scholarship established in NHS's name that will send a special needs child to a week of summer camp each year. Perhaps another new Swiss chard lover!

For more PlayGarden info see www.childrensplaygarden.com. 

Wendy Welch is a member of the NHS board, the Great Plant Picks Committee, and the PlayGarden design team.

NHS BULLETIN BOARD

~ 2011 WINTER CLASSES ~

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 6:00 PM – 8:00 PM Outdoor Lighting with Russ Haire

Russ is back by popular demand and will discuss and demonstrate the different low voltage outdoor lighting fixtures and their uses. Learn how to brighten your winter evenings and create dramatic lighting effects in your garden year-round. You'll also have an opportunity to see the lighting effects the Pembers have used throughout their garden in Medina. This includes both an enclosed courtyard and an open back garden.

LOCATION: PEMBER GARDEN/MEDINA

FEE: MEMBERS: \$25.00 NON-MEMBERS: \$35.00 LIMIT: 15

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 3:30 PM–5:30 PM Botanical Latin with Daniel Sparler

Have you ever wanted to have a better grasp on the use of botanical Latin? Join Daniel for a slide lecture on why plants are identified using this nomenclature developed in the 18th century and learn how you can use your knowledge of plant names to enhance your selection and use of plants.

LOCATION: ROUNDTREE HOME/BELLEVUE

FEE: MEMBERS: \$25.00 NON-MEMBERS: \$35.00 LIMIT: 20

THURSDAY, MARCH 17, 10:00 AM–12:00 PM Exploding Garden Myths with Linda Chalker-Scott

Linda is an associate professor and Extension Urban Horticulturist at Washington State University and author of *The Informed Gardener*. Linda will give a PowerPoint presentation on digging up myths and planting seeds of thought. She will bring a few of her books for anyone interested. The class will be held at the home and garden of Denise Lane. You'll have an opportunity to see Denise's newly completed courtyard.

LOCATION: LANE HOME/MEDINA

FEE: MEMBERS: \$25.00 NON-MEMBERS: \$35.00 LIMIT: 18

FOR RESERVATIONS E-MAIL NWHORT@AOL.COM
OR CALL KARIN KRAVITZ AT 206-780-8172

SPRING PLANT SALE TO BENEFIT THE MILLER LIBRARY

SATURDAY, MARCH 12
9:00 AM TO 5:00 PM

NHS Hall, Center for Urban Horticulture

Over 15 specialty growers will be bringing a wonderful assortment of spring ephemerals and companion plants, plus a lecture by Dan Hinkley, and many additional features.



~ WEDNESDAY EVENING LECTURE SERIES ~

LECTURE 7:15 PM, RECEPTION 6:45 PM
NHS HALL, CENTER FOR URBAN HORTICULTURE
MEMBERS \$5.00 NON-MEMBERS \$10.00

NO RESERVATIONS TAKEN

January 12, 2011
Gardening Where We Live:
A Pacific Northwest Convergence
Lucy Hardiman

February 9, 2010
Life is Good & Delicious in a Northwest Garden
Lorene Edwards Forkner

FULL SCHEDULE OF LECTURES AND UPCOMING EVENTS CAN BE
FOUND ON OUR WEBSITE: WWW.NORTHWESTHORT.ORG

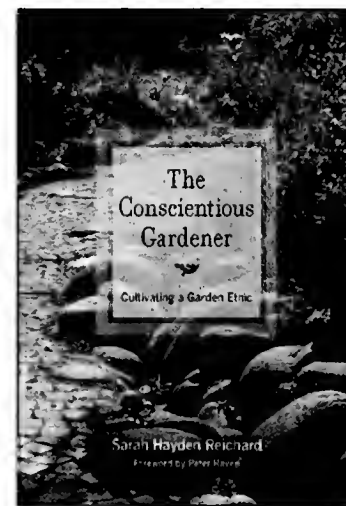
~ BOOK LAUNCH PARTY ~

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 2011
The Conscientious Gardener:
Cultivating a Garden Ethic

Sarah Reichard

Sarah is Associate Director of the UW Botanic Gardens where she oversees the Washington Rare Plant Care and Conservation Program, the Hyde Herbarium, classes for the public and professionals, and youth and family programs in the Washington Park Arboretum. Her new book *The Conscientious Gardener: Cultivating a Garden Ethic* draws from cutting edge research on urban horticulture and explores the many benefits of sustainable gardening. She will share her straightforward, practical advice on topics such as pest control, water conservation, living with native animals, mulching, and invasive species.

This lecture will benefit the Washington Rare Plant Care and Conservation Program at the UW Botanic Gardens which is dedicated to conserving Washington's native rare plants through methods including *ex situ* conservation, rare plant monitoring, research, reintroduction, and education.



CO-SPONSORED WITH UW BOTANIC GARDENS

LECTURE 7:30 PM RECEPTION & BOOK SALES 6:45 PM
NHS HALL, CENTER FOR URBAN HORTICULTURE

TICKETS \$15.00

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



RAY LARSON

AS ANOTHER YEAR DRAWS TO A CLOSE, and we look forward to 2011, it's a good time to reflect back on the activities of NHS over the last year.

We again offered a full and diverse slate of educational programs, highlighted by well-attended lectures, classes, tours, and another relevant and inspiring symposium.

The third year of our Spring Ephemeral Sale continued to be a success—and further cemented itself as a fitting kickoff to the gardening season. While the Fall Sale was down a bit in attendance, I personally thought it had the best selection of plants of any sale in recent memory.

We continued our financial support of the Miller Library, and ended the year by helping them celebrate their 25th anniversary. And we were again able to award \$10,000 in grants to local gardening causes.

Of course, none of this would be possible without you, our members. Your enthusiasm, support, and volunteerism make NHS the worthwhile and successful organization it is. We remain a strong, vibrant, and growing organization because of your contributions.

I'd like to thank the board members who have completed their terms this year: **Nita-Jo Rountree**, who has been a tireless advocate for NHS and has helped in so many areas, including serving as a past president; **Lorene Edwards Forkner**, who has served as a liaison to Pacific Horticulture among other duties; **Dan Corson**, who chaired the Grants Committee; and **Riz Reyes** who brought a younger perspective to the board and introduced us to the world of social media. We welcome new board members **Emily Dexter**, **Dominique Emerson**, **Kirsten Fitzgerald**, **Jerry Gettel**, **Daniel Mount**, **Chuck Ogburn**, **Jackie White** and **Marty Wingate** and thank them for agreeing to serve.

The lecture series for 2011 begins on January 12 with Lucy Hardiman's presentation on the ideas behind some of the great gardens of the Northwest in *Gardening Where We Live: A Pacific Northwest Convergence*. On February 9, Lorene Edwards Forkner will speak about the pleasures of combining ornamentals, edibles, and fruitful woody plants in *Life is Good and Delicious in a Northwest Garden*. The end of February brings the Northwest Flower & Garden Show, and we will again need volunteers to help staff our booth.

Our Spring Sale expands this year with more vendors and inspirational lectures by Dan Hinkley. Circle **Saturday, March 12**, on your calendars for this event that supports the Miller Library.

The annual NHS Spring Symposium on **Saturday, March 26, 2011**, is always a popular event, so don't wait too long to reserve your spot. Among the many tours we are offering this year, the tour of German gardens from June 15-30 promises to be especially exciting.

However you choose to participate this year, we look forward to welcoming you and sharing the inspiration and joys of gardening together. We hope you will join us, and we encourage you to invite your friends to come see all that NHS has to offer. 🌱

Ray Larson is the president of NHS.

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NHS GRANTS AWARDED TO FOUR NON-PROFITS

RIZANIÑO "RIZ" REYES

NHS IS PLEASED TO HAVE BEEN ABLE TO ALLOCATE \$10,000 in grants to support other horticultural organizations in our community. Four non-profits were selected to receive \$2,500 each to support specific projects and programs.

As a preservation project of the Garden Conservancy, **The Chase Garden** was awarded funds to develop interpretive signage and increase their online presence for this lovely garden. **Seattle Youth Garden Works**, a previous recipient of an NHS grant, was again awarded funds for their proposal. On the verge of closing its operations, it has teamed up with Seattle Filth to continue its programs for homeless and at-risk youth. A similar program in Olympia called **Garden-Raised Bounty**,

GRuB, was awarded a grant for their Kitchen Garden Project that uses community volunteers and low-income youth in their employment program to build free gardens for low-income families. The fourth grant was awarded to the **Chinese Reconciliation Project Foundation** for plants and landscaping materials to be used in the development of the Tacoma Chinese Reconciliation Park.

NHS would like thank everyone who submitted applications for grants in 2010, and we wish them continued success with their worthwhile and exciting projects. 🌱

"Riz" Reyes is a former NHS board member.



NORTHWEST HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

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RICHIE STEPHEN/GREAT PLANT PICKS

Helleborus x ericsmithii and Epimedium brachyrrhizum

*"I like these cold, gray winter days. Days like these let you savor a bad mood."
Bill Watterson, 1958— American cartoonist and creator of Calvin and Hobbes*